

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A wafer processing apparatus ~~including a chamber~~ for processing a wafer ~~stored in~~ transferred from a clean box having an access opening to allow accessing an inside of the clean box and a lid to close the ~~clean box in an~~ access opening wherein an the inside of the chamber ~~clean box is separated from a circumstance of the outside of the clean box by closing the access opening with the lid in a mini-environmental condition in which the inside of the chamber is pressurized to a pressure higher than a pressure of an outside of the chamber,~~ said wafer processing apparatus comprising:

a chamber pressurized to a pressure higher than a pressure of an outside of the chamber;

a first opening formed on a part of a wall of the chamber for transferring a wafer between ~~[[a]]~~ the clean box and the chamber through said opening; and

a door ~~which opens the clean box and said opening with taking the lid off, or inserts the lid through said opening to close the clean box with the lid and close said opening, and~~ member capable of holding the lid of the clean box so as to open or close the access opening and said first opening from an inside of said chamber;

wherein an outer periphery of said door member is larger than a periphery of said first opening to cover a whole part of said first opening from the inside of said chamber,

wherein when said door member closes said first opening to open or close the access opening and said first opening from an inside of the chamber, a first gap is formed between the wall of the chamber and ~~[[an]]~~ a larger area of said door in which the outer peripheral periphery of said door and the lid while said door opens or closes is larger than the periphery of said first opening,

wherein in said first gap, ~~is formed such that~~ a flow rate of gas flowing from the chamber from an inside of the chamber to an outside of the chamber through said first gap is substantially equal to a flow rate of gas flowing out from a second gap formed between the clean box and an outer surface of the wall of the chamber.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A wafer processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a dimension of said first gap and an inside pressure of the chamber are defined such that the gas does not flow into an inside of the clean box through said first gap.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): A wafer processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when said door is closed, said first gap is maintained in gas fluidical communication with an inside and an outside of the chamber.

Claims 4-12 (Canceled).

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): A wafer processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

one or more gas flow paths formed at least at a vicinity of edges of said door, wherein said first gap is in gas fluidical communication with said one or more gas flow paths, and

wherein a flow rate of a gas flowing through the gas flow path is substantially equal to a flow rate of the gas flowing from the inside of the chamber to the outside of the chamber through said opening when the door is opened.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): A wafer processing apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the first gap is uniformly formed along a side of an outer peripheral shape of the door.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A wafer processing apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the door is in substantially the shape of a square.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): A wafer processing apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the first gap is uniformly formed along a side of an outer peripheral shape of the lid when the lid is inserted through said opening.